

¶ A LETTER SENT FROM A
banished Minister of Iesus Christ,
vnto the faithfull Christian flocke
in England, most necessary and cō-
fortable to al such, as be burthened
With persecucion or heauinesse
of mynde for the Gos-
pel and testimonye
of Iesu.

Lord encrease our faith.

Iohn. xvi.

**In the worlde you shal haue aff-
liccion, but be of good cheate,
I haue ouercome the World.**

**Printed at Roane by Michael
V Vodde, the. iiii. of
Ianyarye.
Anno Do. M. D. LIIII.**

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 In the world you shall have tribu-
 llation, but be of good cheere,
 I have overcome the world.

Printed at London by Michael
 Woodcock, at the
 Anno Domini 1611.

THE GRACE AND FAVOUR
of our Lord Iesus Christ, the chari-
tie of God, and communication of
his holy spirite, rest in you (dearelye
beloued) to the confirmaciō of
your life in godlynes, vnto
the ende. Amen.

IT was not without an vrgēt Math. vii
cause (louyng frendes) that Luk. vi,
our sauour Christ preachig and. xiiii.
his excellent Sermon in the
mount to his disciples, did knitte vp
the same wyth the symilitude of a
wise & folish builder. The one build-
ing vpon the rocke, the other vpon
the sand: The one buylding remay-
ning, the other vtterlye decayed, by
the impetuous rage of raine, wynde
and floudes. wherinit behoueth vs,
to consider principally. iiii. thinges.
First, that the beginning of Christiā
religion, consisteth in diligent build-
ing, and not in idle liuing: Second-
ly, the cause why we must bulde, is
to the entent, that in tyme of nede,
we may haue a strong castel, and in-
uincible fortresse, to flie vnto, in all
our necessities, therby the better to
be preserued from the power, tiran-
ny, and sodaine inuasion of all our
A. ii, enemies.

A godly letter sent
enemies. Thirdly, in this similitude,
we are admonished, that as vereli as
we haue built our tower, & that as
vereli as it standeth: so certainly shal
the rain descend, the wyndes blow,
& the flouds arise against it, to trye
the strength and situacion thereof.

¶ VVe the Christiā flock of Englad
(brethre) bi the merciful prouidence
of God, for the space of .vi. or .vii.
yeres haue enioied a wōderful calme
& quiet time to build our tower (god
his name be praised therfore) much
like the Halciō daies, when the Hal
tion birdes do hatche & bring forth
their yong ones, voide of al stormy
tēpestes. For so hath God ben accus
tomed to deale with his Church,
namely to nourish the mēbers there
of, during their infancie, in a wōder
ful calme and quietnes, till they be
growen vp into perfect men: able to
receiue strong meates, and thā doth
he alter their diet, from swetenes to
sowernes, from pleasure to paine. &
From quietnes to aduersitie. Suchie
was the securitie & quietnes of the
Gene. vi. church of God, while the Arke was
in building, in the daies of Noe: but
immedia

to the faithful Christians.

Immediately after, there folowed
such a tempest, as ouerwhelmed the
whole race of the earth. Suche was
also the quietnes amongst the Isra-ii, Para. v
elites, while the temple was in bur-
dyng, in the dayes of Salomon: but
immediately after, there folowed
such a diuision, as subuerted the
whole lēd. Such also was the calme-
nes and quietnes of the church, dur-
ing the presence of Christe, in the
fleshe: in so much that his disciples
wanted no maner of thing. neyther Math. ix.
could they mone or wepe, while the
bridgrom was with thē, but after he
was ascēded, their plēti war turned
into scarciti, & their mirth into mur-
ring. Suche hath bene the calmenes
of other realmes. wheras the gospel
frō time to time hath ben preached,
as Germani. & other places, & name-
ly of this realme of Englande, that a
greater hath not bene heard of, nor
knowē: wherin no enemi durst appear
without rebuke, to hinder our fortis-
ficaciō in the same. Wherefore let vs
not now meruel, nor yet be abashed
if our heauenlye father deale wyth
vs his chyl dren, as he hath dealte

A, tit.

Wit h

A godlye letter sent
 with our predecessours, from the
 beginning: That is, after a calme, to
 stirre vp a tempest, after quietnesse,
 trouble: and after securitie, & ease,
 trauaile and paine, to trye our build-
 ing withal, whether it be situated
 Math. vii vpon the rocke Christ, in the puritie
 of his gospel, through perfect faith
 and godly life, to remaine euermore:
 or els vpon the sand of the vanitie of
 this world, in the decrees, constitutions
 and pleasures of men, through hy-
 pocrisie, forth with to be ouerthro-
 wen. For as S. Paule saith: a tyme
 I. Cor. iii. wyl come, wherein the fire of tribu-
 lation, shal trye euery mans building,
 whether he haue buylded gold, sil-
 uer, or precious stone: eyther straw,
 haye, or timber. And me thinke bre-
 thren, I se the same time appeare, as
 iii. Regu. it were Helias his cloude, rising out
 xviii, of the sea, being as yet no bigger than
 an hand: but forthwith I feare me,
 it wil spread ouer al this land. Where-
 fore with the prophet, let vs gird vp
 our loines, and runne in tyme to our
 tower, before the storme descende:
 and therein, if the same be buylded
 vpon the rocke Christ, we shall not
 only

to the faithful Christians.

only find consolation, but also preservation. And for this purpose, we ii. Tim. ii. are called in the scriptures warriors and souldiours: wherefore now that the battaile approcheth, wherewith the enemies purposeth to beseage our fortresse: let vs not as Cowards waxe faint hearted, running away before the blowes, but rather as men, replete with an invincible courage and boldnes, let vs stand to our taking, in holding fast the ploughe of our profession, whereunto we haue put to handes: & thus not in confidence of our own strength, which is nothing, but in the force & strength of our captaine, vnder whose banner we haue promised to fight, which was neuer overcome, beaten downe, nor put to flight: but by suffering hath subdued al his enemies, and by a crosse, vanquished his aduersaries. And as he our head, hath gone before, the straight pathe, and narrow way vnto eternall lyfe: even so must we his members folowe the same race, if we wil inherit his kingdom. And for this purpose, saith S. Paule, are we fashioned vnto the Rom. viii

A. iiii.

shape

A godlye letter sent

Shape of the sonne of God, not only
to raigne with him in glory, but also
to suffer with him in miserie. For as
he saith in another place: Yf we die
ii. Tim. ii. with him, we shal also liue with him
if we be patiēt, we shal also raigne
with him. But if we shal deny hi, he
shal also deny vs. For the afflictions
of this life, ar not comparable to the
glori of the life to come. This is the
only way brethren, that the church
of god obtaineth victorie bi, not as
worldly princes do. bi subduing, but
bi suffering: not bi drawing out the
sword with Peter, but bi hauing our
heads stricken of with the same: not
bi imprisoning, & binding of other,
but bi being imprisoned & bound our
selues. For as Christes kingdom was
not of this world, as he himself wit-
nesseth, nomore is our force, strength
& inheritance here. For our portion
in this life, is but as shepe appointed
to the slaughter. & as pilgrims, tra-
ueling through many tribulations, ne-
cessities & miseries, towards the land
i. Pet. ii. of promise, being compassed about
with enemies on euery side. But thei
with al their malice, shal not anoye
vs, nor yet hinder our iourney, if we

to the faithfull Christians.

Continue faithfull, but rather further
the same. Yea, the lord wil neuer for
sake vs, but bi day go before vs, in a
cloude. & by night in a pillar of fire.
And although Moses for our vnwor
thines be taken frō vs: yet will the
Lord stir vp a Iosuah, to lead vs in
to our inheritance, in throwing out
oure enemyes before our faces. Here
is set furth (brethren) the tragedi of
our liues. Let vs be contented with
al, & aboue al thinges, let vs auoyde
murmuratiōs against the higher po
wers, who are Gods instruments, to
worke his will: whether it be life, or
death, good or euil, least we perishe
with the rebellious Israelites in the
desert. Furthermore, if we do depe
licōsider the great vtilitie. that the
crosse brigeth to the church of god,
we haue rather occasiō to wish for
it, & to reioyce whe it cōmeth, the to
repine & murmur. For bi it our founda
ciō is tried, our faith confirmed, our
knowledge encreased, cōtinuāce in
praier exercised, being frō the wic
ked & hipocrites separated, wherby
the drosse & corruption of our life is
beatē of, as the rust of iro with a hā
mer. For

Exo. xliii

Nu. xliii;
and .xvi.

II. TIM. 1.10

A godlye letter sent

For if we lye still as rusty yronne,
& be not brought vnder the hāmer
of aduersiti, we consume away, and
serue to no vse. For gold is not puri-
fied, but by fyre. wherfore if we de-
site to be pure, let vs not thē despise
that fyre, wherby we are made pure.
For hitherto we haue experienced
a christian life, as Children practise
the feates of warre, by sygnes and
shewes without any bloody battail,
in triumphing before the victori: but
victorye is not obtained wyth losse
and daunger. Christ our heade, lost
his humayne lyfe, to obtaine victo-
rye for vs, and to triumph ouer oure
enemies: and do we thincke to op-
taine the same, by sytting in securiti
and ease at home in our houses? pas-
sing our tyme in pleasures, ease and
ioye, with our wyues, children and
frendes, enuironed with our ryches,
lands, and possessions, without com-
ing to the battail, without hasara-
ding our lyues, without forsakyng
our cuntryes, without passyng the
seas? No truli. For as S. Paule saith.
H. Tim. ii no mā that warreth, entangleth him-
selfe with worldly busines, & that
he

to the faithful Christians.

he maye the better please him, that hath chosen him to be a souldiour.

Now brethren, if ther be a battail towards, as we suppose, let vs shew our selues worthy souldiours, considering the worthines of our Capaine, whom we serue, who did not let to abandō his incomparable glo-
rye, and to clothe him self with our miserable humanitie, for our commodities: therin obtaining victory, not for him, but for vs. So likewise, let ther be no worldli thing so dear vnto vs, as may once retorte, or strai-
vs, from faithful seruing of our lord and prince, whose seruauntes we are by profession (and I trust by elecc-
on) without any mutacion, continuing in probation, the ende whereof is glorificacion. VVhat is he bre-
thren, that would not be contented to haue the seede of tribulation sown in hys lyfe, when it bryngeth furth such plentye of good frute, as
paciencie, experience, & hope which shall neuer be confounded. These are the vtilities, profites and commodities, that aduersitie bryngeth
to the church of God, with a greate
deale

Rom. viii

A godlye letter sent
deale more, which I am not able to
recyte, for wāt of experience, in that
behalfe. wherfore let vs not despice
the crosse, when it cōmeth, conside-
ring the benefites therof: but rather
Ecclo. ii. obey the counsell of the wise man,
wher he saith: My sōne, if thou wilt
come into the seruice of God, stand
fast in righteousnes, & fear, & arme
thi selfe to suffer temtaciō. Settle
shine hart, & be pacient, & shrinke
not awaye, when thou art entised.
Read for your cōsolation the hole
chapter, fortherin is briefly descri-
bed, what ought to be the life of a
Christian, & wherunto he must pre-
pare him selfe, euen to the crosse of
tribulation, as to the only souerigne
medicaine to cure al our festered dis-
eases. On the other syde brethren,
for our farther cōfort, in the dayes
of our trouble, let vs often call to re-
membraūce, not onely the great lo-
ving kindnes of our euetlasting god
& father, wherwith he hath alwayes
loued vs: but also his omnipotencie,
& mighti hād, wherbi he onli ruleth
& gouerneth al his creatures, euerie
where: So that nothing is, or can be
done

to the faithful Christians.

Don against his prouidence, purpose
& will. For all thing serue him at a
becke, yea he putteth a bridel in the Esaye
mouth of tirants, so that although xxxiiii.
they pretende to make a long race,
yet doth he stop them sodenly, as it
apeareth by Senacherib, when he
purposed to destroy Hierusalem in
the time of king Ezechias. For the
wicked & the vngodly, are nothing
els, but the instruments of god, wher
by he worketh his pleasure: As wit-
nesseth the prophet Esaias, calling
them Axes, Sawes, Rods, & Staues
Which can procede no further, then
it pleaseth their owner to vse them
to his glory. Sathan could not mo-
leste Iob, til he had licence, no. The
deuil could not so much, as enter in-
to the poore Hog, without the com-
maundement of Christe. And shall
then his wicked members, anoye &
hurt vs, the children of god, without
the leaue and licence of our father?
No truly. Wherefore let vs comfort
our selues, for we ar dear vnto him,
as the Apple of his eye. The heares
of oure headdes are nombred, and
the race of our lyfe is lymyted.

Esaye. x.

Iob. i. ii.

Mat. viii.

Ezcha. ii.

Math. x.

So

A godly letter sent

John. xv.
and. xvi.

Mark. iiii.
Luk. viii.

So that, yf all the world wolde conspire, to abbridge the same, they shall not be able, til our hour come. And when it cometh, it is the finall ende of all oure sorowe, miserie, calamitie, & payne: and the begynning of all oure ioyes, felicities, and pleasures. For duryng the time of this lyfe, Christe promiseth vs nothing, but afflictions, sorow, & Weeping: But he biddeth vs be of good cheare, sayig, that oure sorow shall be turned into Ioye: what nede we fear, as long as we haue Christ with vs in oure bote? although stormes & tēpestes do arise able to ouerwhelme vs? And if he, during the calme time, do fal a sleape in oure heartes, by ouer greate securitie, and confidence in oure owne strength, yet in the time of oure aduersitye, yf we earnestly call vpon him, he wil suetly awake, and helpe vs: not only in rebuking the windes, and sees our enemies, but also bringing vs to a quiet harbour, euen the kingdome of his father, purchased for vs thorough hys bloudde.

And thus I ende, beeyng bolde to trouble

to the faithful Christians.
trouble you with this my long letter,
wherin are containd many words,
but fewe sentences: But as it is, take
it in woorth, and according to my
rudenes, I haue supplied youre ho-
nest request, in perfourming my pros-
mise. And where there is no better,
be content to accepte a lyttle water
from the handes of your frende, to
quenche your thirst wythal, in steede
of good wyne.

The Lorde blesse you, prosper and
encrease you in knowledge, wis-
dome and vnderstanding,
preseruyng you fayth-
ful vnto the end.

Amen.

The spirite of Christ be with you
and comfort you al, to his
glorye, Amen.